THE GLOBE AND MAIL

HD **Globe Climate: Oil, political connections, protests and elephants**

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Also inside: What you need to know about the anti-logging protest in B.C.

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Good afternoon, and welcome to Globe Climate, a newsletter about climate change, the environment and resources in Canada.

Since last week, RCMP have arrested more than 100 people blockading logging roads in a Vancouver Island valley, in a protest that is shaping up to be the largest act of civil disobedience over logging in British Columbia in decades.

Much of it is taking place in Premier John Horgan's riding. As Horgan's government drafts a new old-growth forestry model for the entire province, the battle over Fairy Creek is putting a spotlight on the management of a shrinking base of ancient forests.

If you remember last week, Justine Hunter wrote stories about the RCMP arrests, as protests escalated, and the broken political promises that led us here today.

This week, don't miss her guide about what you need to know about the Fairy Creek blockade 2021 with useful maps and photos by Jesse Winter.

Now, let's catch you up on other news.

Noteworthy reporting this week:

A deeper dive

Virgin oil, political connections, protests and elephants

Emma Graney covers energy from The Globe and Mail's Calgary bureau. For this week's deeper dive, she talks about a Canadian company now at the heart of a dispute over the wildlife-rich Okavango Delta.

The story of Reconnaissance Energy Africa Ltd. (known as ReconAfrica), a little-known junior Canadian energy company, has the ingredients of a Hollywood blockbuster: the picturesque Okavango Delta and its vast gatherings of wildlife, potentially the world's last major virgin oil play, political connections, protests and, of course, elephants.

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ReconAfrica wants to develop what it believes is the last untouched sedimentary basin in the world. But there's a hitch - the region is also one of the most famous wildlife conservancies in Africa. As the company drills wells to establish just how much oil slops beneath its land lease that covers 35,000 square kilometres spanning Namibia and Botswana, international attention on the project grows. So too do concerns about the pachyderms, the broader environment and the UNESCO heritage-listed sites around the planned development. Rumblings of discontent have come not just from international groups, but on the ground in Southern Africa where past oil developments have had a bad track record when it comes to corruption, and economic and environmental issues. I've been hearing these worries in Canada in my role as The Globe's energy reporter, and so has our Africa bureau chief Geoffrey York, in Johannesburg.

With the International Energy Agency warning that the world must phase out fossil fuels, we wanted to know: Is the ReconAfrica oil project the last gasp of a fading industry? Or is it Namibia's best hope for escaping poverty and generating desperately needed jobs and energy?

- Emma

What else you missed

Watch: After 17 years spent alone underground, billions of red-eyed cicadas are emerging across the U.S. East Coast. Scientists suspect their life cycles could be related to global warming. Francesca Lynagh reports.

The expected uptake of electric vehicles and stricter measures worldwide to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions are the top reasons why a climate-focused research group is calling on governments not to invest any more money in Alberta's oil sector.

More damaging earthquakes can be expected more often in northern British Columbia as fracking oil and gas wells increases pressure underground, newly published research says.

A conservation group trying to prevent ships from striking endangered whales in the Gulf of St. Lawrence says new satellite data indicate that vessels transiting the Cabot Strait are routinely ignoring voluntary speed limits.

Ottawa has set up a panel of Indigenous representatives, scientists and commercial fishers to discuss lobster conservation as Mi'kmaq fishers prepare for a return to a summer harvest off southwestern Nova Scotia.

Opinion and analysis

Adam Radwanski: Liberals' new greener-homes grant aims to boost energy efficiency - and attract climate-friendly voters

Jessica Scott-Reid: Where's the beef? To truly tackle climate change, Canada must get to a place where we don't even ask

Eric Reguly: Big Oil's bad day won't change much in the foreseeable future

Andrew Clark: If charging stations were more visible, it might assuage my range anxiety with electric vehicles

Green Investing

Jeff Jones asks: What is in your ESG fund? In Canada, there are no clear definitions

But those who invest in ESG funds should know that the big stock holdings in many of those portfolios are the same as those at the top of the country's main stock index - that is, big banks and big tech. Some of the discrepancy is a function of different interpretations of what makes up an ESG or sustainability fund.

"It's kind of the Wild West here in Canada. There's no regulated way to define what type of sustainable investments there are," said Ian Tam, director of investment research for Canada at Morningstar Inc.

Globe advisor: Does investing responsibly deliver alpha?

Credit Suisse: 'ESG Stocks for a Reopening Economy'

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Making waves

Each week The Globe will profile a Canadian making a difference. This week, we're highlighting the work of Maryam and Nivaal Rehman doing advocacy and storytelling at the same time.

Our names are Maryam and Nivaal Rehman, we're both 19, and we are based in Clarington, Ontario. We are twin activists, journalists and filmmakers and also the co-founders of The World With MNR, our nonprofit which uses advocacy, storytelling and development projects to take action for climate justice, gender equality and inclusivity.

Climate Change is one of the most pressing issues of our time, and through our organization, we create spaces for raising awareness for and taking climate action. We also strive for our platform to bridge the gap between global issues and what people can do to help. In line with this vision, we create multimedia content on various topics, including climate action,which you can view here.

We have always believed that climate action is in our hands, and we encourage you to continue joining efforts for environmental change because together, we can protect the people and places we love!

- Maryam and Nivaal

Do you know an engaged individual? Someone who represents the real engines pursuing change in the country? Email us at GlobeClimate@globeandmail.com to tell us about them.

Photo of the week

Catch up on Globe Climate

Behind the story of thwarted efforts to help steelhead trout

Don't underestimate the power of the garden

High stakes in the Line 5 energy dispute

Canadian youth demand action over words ahead of COP26

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